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## BRIEFS

### FEDS: BOY CAN USE GIRLS' LOCKER ROOM

CHICAGO (BP) — The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights told a suburban Chicago school district it has 30 days to comply with demands for transgender equality or be punished. The school district in Palatine, which expressed concerns about teen males and females seeing each other naked, put up privacy curtains in the girls' locker room and offered to let biologically-male transgender students change there if they undressed behind the curtains. That was rejected by the Office of Civil Rights, which said it is still willing to negotiate with the school district but not willing to suspend its threat of withholding about six million dollars in federal funding if no accord is reached.

### ELECTION SEEN AS BIG VICTORY FOR FAMILIES

NASHVILLE (BP) — Pro-family voters scored impressive wins at the polls nationwide on election day. Houston, Texas, overturned a measure granting protected status to homosexuals and transgendered persons (see adjacent article). Both Kentucky and Mississippi elected governors who are pro-life and opposed to same-sex marriage. Ohio defeated recreational marijuana. Ryan Anderson, a senior research fellow at The Heritage Foundation, wrote in an online commentary that Election Day 2015 disproved the "conventional wisdom ... that social liberalism is an electoral winner."

### FACILITIES USAGE CONSULT AVAILABLE

In light of the U.S. Supreme Court's June 26 decision legalizing same sex marriage nationwide, the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) is offering a Facilities Usage Policy consultation to churches in friendly cooperation with the convention. The consultation includes an in-house visit from MBCB personnel and written materials. There is no charge for the consultation. For more info or to schedule a consultation, call the MBCB Church Growth Division at (601) 292-3310, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 310. E-mail: sbell@mbcb.org.

## Floyd denounces racism

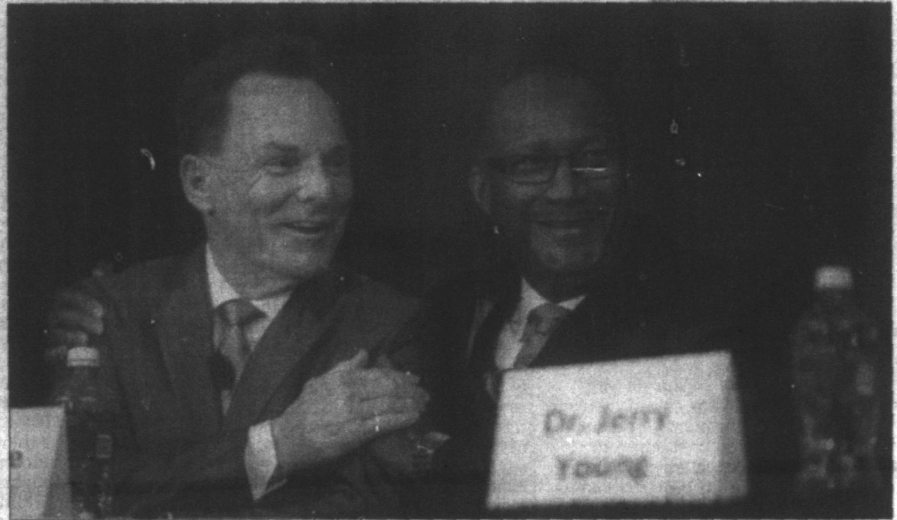
### SBC pres: 'Racism opposite of Christ'

JACKSON, Miss. (BP and local reports) — Racism is from Satan and his demonic forces and the only hope for its defeat is the church of Jesus Christ united across societal divisions, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Ronnie Floyd told a culturally diverse group of Baptists and other faith group leaders Nov. 4 in Mississippi's capital city.

"I believe that the issue of racism is from Satan and the demonic forces of hell," Floyd told hundreds gathered at Mission Mississippi's racial reconciliation celebration at the Jackson Convention Center.

"Racism is completely opposite from the message of Jesus Christ. It is completely opposite of the message of love. It is completely opposite of the message of dignity, value, and the sanctity of human life. It is completely opposite of the message of reconciliation."

Floyd spoke to Southern Baptists, National Baptists, and others at the event aimed at exhorting and energizing pastors and the church to demonstrate the love of



**BROTHERS IN CHRIST** — Ronnie Floyd (left), president of the Southern Baptist Convention and senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, and Jerry Young, president of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., and pastor of New Hope Church in Jackson, moderated a panel discussion and delivered joint keynote addresses at Mission Mississippi's racial reconciliation celebration Nov. 4 at the Jackson Convention Center in downtown Jackson. (BP photo courtesy of Cross Church)

God in ending racism in Mississippi and the nation.

"One of the reasons I came to this city was to notify Satan and his demonic forces that... enough is enough," Floyd said at a luncheon after the racial reconciliation celebration adjourned. "The power of God is greater than the forces of evil, even the evil of racism, because

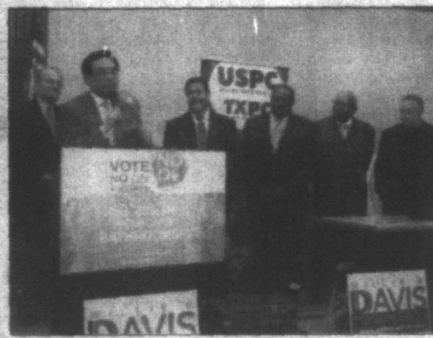
greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world."

He called pastors to action, shunning passivity and silence. "It is now [that] the church of Jesus Christ must rise. We must rise together as one. We are not black churches. We are not white churches. We are not Latino churches, and we're not Asian churches, and we're not any other

kind of church. We are the church of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. That's who we are and our hope for racism to end in this country is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"It is the church who must be for the city of Jackson and whatever city y

## Houston voters defeat HERO



**'HERO' FAILS** — Khanh Huynh, pastor of Vietnamese Church in the Houston, Texas area, addresses supporters after election results indicated the controversial Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO) was decisively defeated. (BP photo courtesy of Southern Baptist TEXAN)

**HOUSTON (BP and local reports)** — Houston, Texas voters convincingly turned away a controversial equal rights ordinance that critics said threatened religious liberties and put into jeopardy the safety and dignity of men and women in private places like bathrooms.

Proposition 1, also referred to as the "Bathroom Ordinance," failed by a margin of 61% to 39%. "I think it's significant," Ed Young, pastor of Houston's Second Church, told the TEXAN newspaper when asked about the margin of victory. "I think there are enough people in the city who still have and will vote godly principles. A lot of people did some soul searching and said this is enough."

Young joined others at the Houston Area Pastors Council Watch Party on election night Nov. 3, where everyone seemed cautiously optimistic the organization's work would pay off.

After 18 months of legal battles including a court trial, two Texas Supreme Court decisions, appeals, and a move by the mayor's office to

see HERO on p. 7

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## From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

### The takeover

**L**egalized gambling has had enormous social and cultural impacts on Mississippi since the first small riverboat casinos were approved in the early 1990s. Even fair-minded supporters of gambling admit that much.

Having just passed the ten-year anniversary of former Governor Haley Barbour's broken campaign promise that he would not expand gambling — he called a post-Hurricane Katrina special session of the Legislature to do just that — the people of Mississippi should take a hard look at how life has radically changed since the advent of legalized gambling.

As our jails and prisons fill with otherwise law-abiding citizens hooked on gambling to the point of fraud and embezzlement, as our children go without basic necessities while their parents gamble away paychecks and life savings, as families rupture and communities explode, powerful gambling interests continue to push their agenda with the help of an unsavory group of pliant politicians, news media toadies, and money-hungry businessmen.

Virtually every governmental body in counties where gambling has been approved have to ask what is known as The Question about virtually every issue that comes before them: "How will this affect the casinos?"

That's certainly true of the Legislature, the majority of whom at the time gave the gamblers everything they demanded in the post-Hurricane Katrina special session by passing House Bill (HB) 45 and allowing the out-of-state interests to move their gambling halls off the water and 800 feet inland.

Even HB 45's 800-foot rule is smoke and mirrors. During the special session, legislators allowed and the governor approved an exception to the 800-foot rule. All street and highway rights-of-way, as well as any utility rights-of-way, are excluded from the 800-foot count.

That meant casinos could move well beyond a literal 800-foot boundary to build their gambling halls even further inland. You say you didn't know that? That's because the gambling/political complex and especially the news media at the time — themselves beholden to the gamblers' bottomless advertising budgets — didn't exactly give that clause top billing in their reportage.

That's just one example of how the gambling/political complex has gotten their way in this state. Here's another. Former Mississippi Secretary

of State Eric Clark waged a frustrating fight during his time in office trying to persuade the gamblers and their politician friends to follow the state laws with which they disagreed.

Clark took on the Gulf Coast casinos over their exploitation of tidelands which are owned by the people of Mississippi. (Tidelands are the submerged lands along the coastline and lands covered by the daily rise and fall of tides. Funds from the use of these tidelands by private interests are held in trust by the Secretary of State for the people of Mississippi.)

Gamblers made so many attempts to avoid responsibility for their use of the tidelands — including several major lawsuits filed and bills promoted in the Legislature to strip Clark of his oversight duties — that Clark said of one such attempt, "It's a plain example of the casinos and their lobbyists trying to dictate terms to the state, rather than the state effectively managing the casinos."

In another instance, Biloxi attorney Britt Singletary, representing one of the casinos involved in a tidelands dispute, told the Sun-Herald newspaper that Clark was running a "rouge agency" and had launched a public relations campaign against his client using Baptist news media. He and his client apparently didn't much like the unsavory picture of legalized gambling being painted in The Baptist Record.

The Sun-Herald also quoted Singletary referring to his client's opponents as "crazy Christians."

After years of wrangling and pressure, the gambling/political complex was finally able to tilt Mississippi's tidelands laws in their favor during the post-Hurricane Katrina special session. According to the Sun-Herald, the Mississippi House of Representatives passed the revised tidelands deal by a vote of 109-4 as tallied on the chamber's voting machine but, as the newspaper pointed out, only about 40 House members were actually present at the time.

So how did 113 votes get cast with only 40 representatives present?

Looks like we "crazy Christians" better brace ourselves for more stunts like that in the future, and for the eventual complete takeover of our state by the gambling/political complex. They'll be satisfied with nothing less.

*Revised and updated from an earlier commentary published in this space.*

## Listening to a sermon

**I** admit it. I'm not a good listener. I'm so accustomed to preaching most Sundays that I struggle listening to others (and my wife will undoubtedly affirm that). I'm a bit hesitant to talk about how to listen to a sermon, except that I'm really talking to myself as much as I am to the reader. You're welcome to eavesdrop on these suggestions:



**Guest opinion**  
with Chuck Lawless

■ **Pray for the preacher and the sermon long before the service.** If I wait until the sermon starts to begin praying (or worse yet, never pray for the preacher and the sermon), I've not adequately prepared myself to listen.

■ **Deal with any known sin in your life before the service.** I know this step sounds "preachy," but it's nonetheless imperative. Unconfessed sin will block your heart and your ears. My suggestion is before Sunday, spend 30 minutes asking God to reveal all your sin to you. Then, just listen. Let the Spirit of God uncover your heart. Confess. Repent. Get ready to listen.

■ **Have a copy of the Bible with you.** It may be a printed copy or an electronic copy (see point number five below) but have a copy you can look at for yourself. Even if your church posts the Scripture on a screen, having the Word in front of you can help you listen. If you don't have a copy, ask a leader in the church to provide you a copy.

■ **Sit where you can most pay attention.** If the windows distract you, don't sit near them. If you know you can hide in the balcony, sit someplace else. If sitting with particular people causes you to lose your attention, you may need to sit with someone else. Hearing the Word of God matters.

■ **Put away your phone.** This is one reason why I'd prefer you have a printed copy of the Bible with you, though I realize that's not the world in which Westerners live. Facebook can wait. Don't respond to email during the service. If you want to tweet something positive about the sermon, write it down and tweet it later.

■ **Just before the service, ask God to help you hear the Word as it applies to you.** You may have worries you can't ignore, so ask God to speak to

them. Maybe you have company coming after church and you're thinking about them. If so, ask God to teach you from His Word so you're the best host you can be. Don't try to put your thoughts on hold. Ask God to speak to them.

■ **Listen especially to the Word of God being read.** The Word is mighty in itself, apart from the one who proclaims it. Listen to it closely. Let the stories sink in. Even if you think the preaching could be stronger, the Word of God still has power.

■ **Take notes.** Even an outline will help you remember the points, but you may need to write as much as you can to stay focused. Hearing, seeing, and writing the points will only reinforce the Word in your life.

■ **Listen especially for at least one nugget of truth and application for your life.** Go to church expecting God to speak to you through the sermon. Knowing your life's needs, listen for the truth that intersects with you. Word-based preaching can speak to your life.

■ **Write down one or more action steps you will take in your life after hearing the sermon.** I encourage you to do that before you ever leave the worship space. Write it down. Be specific. For example: "I will ask my neighbor's forgiveness."

Tell somebody about your commitment so you are accountable for obedience. Then go be obedient.

*Lawless (chucklawless.com) is dean of graduate studies and professor of evangelism and missions at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style.*

## THE BaptistRecord

**Editor**  
William H. Perkins Jr.  
wperkins@mbcb.org

**Associate Editor**  
Tony Martin  
tmartin@mbcb.org

**Layout/Design**  
Megan Young  
myoung@mbcb.org

**Advertising**  
Dana Richardson  
drichardson@mbcb.org

**Circulation Manager**  
Amy Massey  
amassey@mbcb.org

**Baptist Record Advisory Committee:**  
Whit Lewis, New Albany  
Derrick Wilson, Kosciusko  
Carolyn Reeves, Oxford  
Garland Boyd, Brookhaven  
Lucy Stringer, Foxworth  
Don Hicks, Bay Springs

**Postmaster:**  
Send changes of address to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

**Send news, communication, and address changes to:** The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

**Tel:** (601) 968-3800  
**Fax:** (601) 292-3330  
**E-mail:** baptistrecord@mbcb.org

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# First Person: Refugees increase, needs overwhelming

By Name Withheld  
Correspondent

**NORTHERN IRAQ (BP)** — Whoever built this tennis court probably never imagined refugees would be reclining there under temporary shelters. The sprawling picnic area, once a shady respite for Sunday leisure seekers is now a tent city that is home to more than 4,000 Yazidi refugees from Northern Iraq.

These mothers, uncles, cousins, and children walked seven days through the desert to escape ISIS in August 2014. Their home has clean water and working toilets, but the camp has only one clinic staffed by a single doctor and a few nurses who struggle to meet the medical needs of thousands.

Several months ago, I learned of the urgent need for dentists to treat the people here. I invited an experienced field dental team from the U.S. to come serve the refugees in the camp. They arrived with a portable chair, instruments, and supplies to treat a variety of challenges. During their time here, they were able to treat the patients with the most severe conditions — abscesses and painful, deep infections that could spread throughout the body.

One of the nurses at the camp, Murad (not his real name), himself a 23-year-old refugee, was overwhelmed by the team's willingness to come all the way from the U.S. at their own expense just to meet the needs of his people here in a dangerous part of the world.

I got to know the soft-spoken Yazidi one evening after the crowd of ailing refugees had finally dispersed from the clinic building. "You made us feel like people," he said.

The dehumanizing experience of being a refugee weighed heavily on him. From the time he left his home in northern Iraq until now, he had been working as a nurse, usually unpaid, caring for countrymen who had fallen ill on the arduous journey. Using his medical skills enabled him to maintain his dignity along the way, but many other Yazidis suffered a more tragic fate.

## Pray

■ Pray for an end to the kidnapping and abuse of Yazidi women. Pray for physical healing and spiritual redemption for young girls who have been enslaved and sexually violated.

■ Ask God to provide permanent homes for the tens of thousands of Yazidi refugees sleeping in tents in Turkey.

■ Ask for a miraculous movement of the Holy Spirit to save and bring abundant life to the Yazidi people.

■ Pray that God will execute justice for the weak and the fatherless and deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

■ Pray that God will give you the desire, resources, and time to walk in obedience as you learn about refugees.

■ Praise God that one day He will destroy His last enemy and Christ will claim the full reward of His suffering as He reigns with His people forever.

Crisis counselors who worked in the refugee camp stated in a report, "Most of the people we encountered were suffering from traumatic grief. The most traumatized age and social group seemed to be the young women. Many of them wept as they recounted horror stories of their friends and sisters being captured and sold into slavery."

"They recounted abuse and torture and expressed grief over the past and the atrocities that continue to befall their captured loved ones. One expressed survivor guilt, another expressed hatred for the perpetrator of such violence, and another wept in miserable resignation for her plight in life."

Murad's younger sister, Narin (not her real name) was kidnapped by ISIS fighters as their family fled their hometown. Murad explained, "She was held for ten months. We heard no word about her well-being. We didn't know if she was still alive." His clear light-brown eyes bore into me with anger and brokenness.

He said that one month ago the family received a request for a \$30,000 ran-



**DESPERATE TIMES** — A Yazidi mother tends to her child at a refugee camp at an undisclosed location. Muslim terrorists belonging to the ISIS extremist group have murdered untold numbers of Yazidi men and boys and sexually enslaved Yazidi women and girls as they have marauded across the Middle East. (BP photo)

som if they wanted to see their sister alive again. Somehow they scraped together the money, and their sister was dropped off in a city on the border between ISIS-controlled territory and Kurdish-controlled territory.

Murad showed me a choppy video on his phone of the emotional reunion. Even through the hugs, the tears, and the wailing of relatives, Narin appeared in shock. She looked happy and hollow at the same time. A tear streamed down my face as I watched. "Oh, Lord, rescue these people," I silently prayed.

Murad and Narin represent a terribly oppressed people. The Yazidi don't want to go back to Iraq where ISIS threatens their lives, but in neighboring countries they are confined to camps where there is no possibility of finding work or buying property to establish a home.

The Yazidis are a vulnerable minority stuck between the bitter Sunni-Shia Muslim divide in Iraq. Most are hoping a country in Europe or North America will open

its doors and welcome them to begin a new life, but even more than a foreign home they need a spiritual home.

I told Murad I was praying for his people. "Jesus Christ loved me first, so I love Him back by loving God and loving my neighbor, who is you," I said.

Murad said he had always wanted to read the New Testament but had never found one. I helped him download an Arabic Bible onto his phone. He was thankful, but I knew that though he spoke Arabic, his heart language was Kurmanji Kurdish.

A few minutes before leaving the camp, I asked Murad if he would step into an examination room with me. I thanked him for sharing his life and his stories with me. I shared the Gospel with him and gave him an audio Bible in Kurmanji.

I played some of Matthew for him. He strained as he listened at first, but his eyes lit up when he recognized his own heart language. He thanked me profusely and carefully slipped the device into his pocket as we prepared to go.

## Baptists working to help impoverished Syrian refugees

**SYRIA (BP)** — Rima (not her real name) was finally shopping again. Her family needed food and supplies, and the young girl was "running and grabbing, just like a little kid" in the supermarket, remembered Abraham Shepherd.

Shepherd, area director for Baptist Global Response (BGR), told the Syrian refugee's story in a meeting room, thousands of miles from the store where he bought Rima's family food.

The family felt joy at the opportunity to shop for themselves instead of taking distributions, Shepherd said. The parents could choose their supplies, enjoying the independence they used to have in their own country. Violence had ruined that life for them and for millions of others. The war inside Syria has raged for five years now and more than a year ago, the self-proclaimed ISIS Muslim extremist group began contributing to the refugee crisis significantly during its quest for a caliphate.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, roughly four million Syrian people have fled the country to seek safety in other countries and more than 7.5 million have been internally displaced.

Eventually, Rima's family became part of the statistics and fled to Greece as refugees. The adjustment was difficult. "It's very hard when you live all your life self-sustained and have your own dignity, your own shelter, your own clothing, to be now a person who has a need... forced to beg and ask strangers to help them out," Shepherd said.

When Shepherd took the family to the supermarket that day, Rima spotted a cheap bottle of nail polish. Her mother told her the family should focus on practical items, but Rima desperately wanted pretty nails. Shepherd decided to buy her the bottle.

"This is the medicine," he said. "The medicine to the soul

— the emotional and psychological well-being."

These refugees, he said, need food and clothing but they also need emotional care. They've been uprooted from their lives, sometimes violently, and they need to process trauma. They need to tell their stories. Sometimes, they need small, frivolous items to help them feel human again.

Through the years, Baptist Global Response has conducted Syrian refugee relief projects that meet physical needs as well as those emotional needs. BGR executive director Jeff Palmer noted Southern Baptists have poured nearly three million dollars through BGR into relief efforts for Syrian refugees. These resources have helped fund projects in several countries and have been used for things like distributions of food, blankets, clothing, and more.

Shepherd said he also used BGR funds to buy Rima's family items from the supermarket.

Francis Horton, another BGR area director, said projects in Istanbul, Turkey, indirectly help refugees pay their rent. BGR funds the purchase of gift cards to grocery stores so displaced people can buy food and hygiene items, which frees up their savings to pay for whatever meager lodgings they can find.

BGR also helps create makeshift classrooms for refugee children. "These are children have been out of school for, you know, four, four-and-a-half, five years, even before they came out of Syria," Horton said. "For many of them, the school was bombed or there was so much fighting, they couldn't go to school. ... We are involved in two projects in Turkey that help to fill that gap and get the children back into an educational environment through classes in English, math, science, and other subjects."

While those efforts satisfy hunger, keep refugees warm,

and boost lagging education, others meet psychosocial needs. For example, Shepherd said he uses volunteers to entertain Syrian children in Greece while their families wait for permission to move to another country.

BGR invites donors to partner with the organization as it carries out these projects and cares for Syrians who have lost their homes. People can give toward Syrian aid through [www.gobgr.org](http://www.gobgr.org) or purchase items like food or blankets through the 2015 Christmas Gift Catalog.

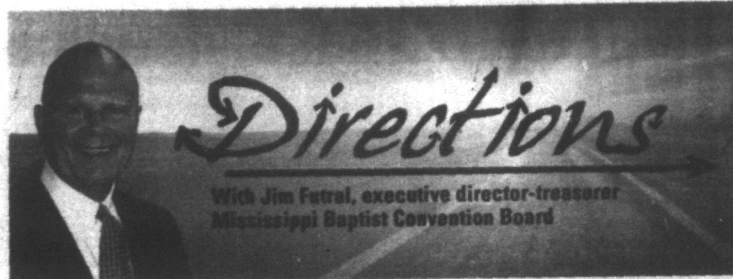
They can also work directly with refugees through BGR's volunteer opportunities, which are posted on its website. BGR also encourages people to pray for these displaced people and for the organization's efforts to clothe and feed them. The only way BGR can aid families like Rima's is through partnership with its donors.

Over the past year, one of my neighbors who is a consistent walker and jogger began to do so without her four-legged companion, her dog. Many months ago I asked her, "Where is your buddy?" To which she said, "He's gotten to where he doesn't want to get out and run or walk." As time has passed on, I wondered if the old boy was still alive so recently I asked her if the dog was still living. "Yes," she replied, "he's still alive but all that he does now is sniff."

I clearly remember him as a younger fella, alive and alert and involved in everything around him. Occasionally he would be walking and break into a jog or even run. Sometimes he would even bark. He was one of those dogs that always seemed to have a friendly bark. He wasn't mad or angry at the world even when he saw a squirrel or person. He would give a yelp and keep on going, but now all he does is sniff.

Through the years, I've seen this happen to folks as they got older and had less energy and capacity to do the things that they used to do. At one time they were the first person to volunteer to do whatever needed to be done. They were willing to serve on committees, plan meetings, serve food, and visit anyone. Whether it was a lost person or a saint that was in need of a touch from a fellow believer, they were there but in time, they weren't able to do all that they had done before. Even if they still had vocal ability, their diminishing eyesight or increasing pain kept them from going to all the rehearsals and other pieces of preparation that few people think about when they hear them sing so beautifully on Sunday.

At one time, they never gave a thought to jumping in the car and going across town or across the state to do whatever needed to be done, but now it's different and even a trip to the store has its complications and its



## Sniffers in the Church

challenges. In a sense, they have been reduced to sniffing. They want to do more. They wish over and over that they could do more, but they just can't do it like they used to — but I need to point out to you that sniffing is not bad. That is, if you use your sniffer to sniff out the good things.

I have known of folks who have come to this part of life and found out that they could enter into people's lives in incredible, life-changing ways by being an encourager, a faithful prayer warrior, and at times, a significant contributor to make a difference in the Kingdom work.

As a boy growing up, I still remember a couple of men who seemed to pay attention to a little knot-head kid and take time to talk with him and be a friend to him. They have both been with the Lord a long time, but what they did for me remains 'til this day. Their names probably have little meaning for most of you readers, but not me. Benny Lundy and Cecil Fitzgerald were heroes to this kid. Both of them were older men and both of them had their own challenges that kept them from doing the things that

they used to do, except to take time to care about a young kid at church.

I think about those wonderful people and precious saints who have for over 50 years from time to time taken time to stop and write a note and let me know that they are praying for me and that they care about me as I seek to serve the Lord. It's almost like they just have a sense about them, maybe just a way to sniff out a need in someone's life and bless them.

I suppose the other side of this whole issue is the sad part that some people seem to be reduced only to be able to sniff out the bad things. Maybe you have run into someone like that, who all along their life seems to know where all the garbage heaps of life were located and were able to detect and discuss every bad thing going on in the community or at the church or in a friend's life. They just seem to have a knack of knowing all the garbage, and then when they can't do anything else they still seem to have that sniffer at work. It's sad, not only because it appears as though that's all they know but even sadder to think that they have to live in the

company and the odors of their own sniffing ability. If that is all I could smell, I would hope that even that part of my smeller would work.

Often when people call me to get a reference on a pastor or a staff person, they will ask me a question that to this day I have refused to answer. The question is, "What are his or her greatest weaknesses?" I respond by telling them that usually, I don't know of any weaknesses and even the weaknesses that I have observed in them in years gone by, they have been so intentionally positive about doing their work that they had overcome the weakness and the weakness had possibly become a strength. Then I tell the folks that even if I knew of a weakness they had, I wouldn't tell them because whatever it was that I would tell them would in time probably be the only thing for which they would look.

Now if there is some glaring moral or ethical issue that exists in a person's life, there may be validity in helping them understand what is there, but if you're talking about someone with a twitch or a certain pattern of speech or is an avid hunter, no, those things will come out if they are weaknesses to you and maybe you can help the person prioritize their life like you think it ought to be done. Surely, probably not in all of our churches but many of them, there will be some faithful person who can sniff out things they don't think are most advantageous in the pastor or staff member's life.

I am convinced that more than being a sniffer at any age or stage in life, the more important thing is that our lives do what the Apostle Paul said we should do and that is that our praise, our walk, our lives shall be of a sweet smelling savor to God (2 Cor. 2:15). May it be true of you and me.

The author can be contacted at [directions@mbcb.org](mailto:directions@mbcb.org).

## OBITUARY

**Caley Ray Nichols**, 87, died October 24 in Clinton. He was born April 27, 1928, in Magee.

Nichols was a graduate of Magee High School; Clark College, Newton; Mississippi College, Clinton; and New Orleans Seminary. Following graduation from high school he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served on the USS Wisconsin in the Atlantic in the final years of WWII.

Nichols his wife Marie in Jackson. They were married on March 3, 1949 in Philadelphia, in the home of a Methodist pastor. Nichols was ordained to the gospel ministry by Southside Church, Jackson, on October 29, 1950. In a 65-year career, he served as pastor of churches in Mississippi, Georgia, and Montana. While an

NOBTS student, Nichols served churches in Crystal Springs, Tylertown, and Hattiesburg. Following graduation from seminary, he pastored churches in Ethel; Albany, Georgia; Magee; Helena, Montana; and Louisville.

While serving as pastor of Helena Valley Church in Montana, the Nichols were commissioned by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention as home missionaries who served ten years as director of missions in western Montana. Following that ministry, the Nichols returned to Mississippi where he served as pastor of the Poplar Flat Church in Louisville. He retired in 1990.

He was preceded in death by his parents M.L. and Beulah Nichols of

Magee, one sister and six brothers. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Marie Nance Nichols; son, Gary Nichols (Carolyn) of Milton, Fla.; daughter, Gwen Robertson (Rick) of Brandon; four grandchildren, Molly Holton (Nathan) of Decatur, Georgia; Elizabeth McCaddy (Kevin) of Jacksonville, Florida; Denise Warnock (Chris) of Florence; and Curtis Robertson (Katie) of Madison. He is also survived by five great-grandchildren, Frances Holton, Parker and Kendall McCaddy, Caleb Warnock, and Cora Robertson. He has one surviving brother, Travis (Frieda) of Baton Rouge, La.

The funeral and interment were held on October 28, in Vicksburg. Brian Ivey officiated.

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For lots of fun at your next meeting contact Bobbie Davis at 601-857-0736 or [maxinenolen5501@comcast.net](mailto:maxinenolen5501@comcast.net)



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

November 12, 2015

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

## Mark your calendar! Church Music Dept. 2016 Dates

*Mississippi Baptist  
All State Youth Choir & Orchestra  
Rehearsal Camp & Tour dates*

**June 6 - June 13**

Contact the Church Music Department  
at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at  
susanc1@bellsouth.net or 601-292-3267  
www.mbc.org



*HeartSong, Music & Worship Arts Camp  
For 6th - 12th Graders (2015-16 Year)*

**June 21 - June 25**

For more information visit [mbcb.org](http://mbcb.org)  
or contact the Church Music Department  
at [susanc1@bellsouth.net](mailto:susanc1@bellsouth.net) or 601-292-3267  
Preview DVD Available

**2016  
AREA  
KEYBOARD  
FESTIVALS**

For more information  
contact Wyndy South,  
Church Music Dept.  
[wsouth@mbcb.org](mailto:wsouth@mbcb.org).

**Thursday, January 28, 2016 | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

Area 2	Calvary BC, 501 W. Main St., Tupelo, 38804	Doug Spires	C-662-842-3338
Area 2	FBC, 106 E. Lampkin St., Starkville, 39759	Tom Jenkins	C-662-323-5633
Area 3	FBC, 431 N. State St., Jackson, 39201	Wyndy South	O-601-292-3272 O-1-800-748-1651
Area 4	Poplar Springs Dr. BC, 4032 Poplar Springs Dr., Meridian, 39305	Michael Gibson	C-601-485-5106
Area 5	Carterville BC, 11125 Carterville Rd., Petal, 39465	Kristopher Smith	C-601-584-9457
Area 5	FBC, Columbia, 900 High School Ave., Columbia, 39429	Hugh Plunkett	C-601-736-2608
Area 5	FBC, 902 Live Oak Ave., Pascagoula, 39567	John White	C-228-762-2343
Area 5	FBC, 607 W. 5th St., Laurel, 39442	Marilyn Huff	H-601-763-8731

**Friday, January 29, 2016 | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

Area 1	Longview Heights BC, 4501 Goodman Rd., Olive Branch, 38654	Blake Krumalis	Cell-662-404-3069
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**Saturday, January 30, 2016 | 9:30 a.m. - noon**

Area 1	Emmanuel BC, 245 Meadowbrook Rd., Grenada, 38901	Barry Worrell	C-662-226-5316
Area 1	North Greenwood BC, 615 Grand Blvd., Greenwood, 38930	Patricia Ethridge	C-662-453-2801

CMD packet includes plans for Children's Ministry Day 2016 and provides colorful posters, a booklet containing decorating tips, ideas for a kickoff party, a recognition event, and learning activities. Visit WMU Web site for Promotion Packet ([www.wmystore.com](http://www.wmystore.com))

# ALL FOR YOU

## Surrender • Sacrifice • Serve

Contact Tammy Anderson (WMU) at [tanderson@mbcb.org](mailto:tanderson@mbcb.org) or 601-292-3323 for more details

# 1% CHALLENGE

**THE 1% CHALLENGE:** Increase your church's Cooperative Program giving this year by 1% of your church's undesignated receipts.

That's a small percentage increase, yet it could produce an increase of \$4 million in additional income each year for missions and ministry!

IF YOUR CHURCH'S UNDESIGNATED RECEIPTS TOTAL...

\$1,000.....	\$10
\$5,000.....	\$50
\$10,000.....	\$100
\$15,000.....	\$150
\$20,000.....	\$200
\$25,000.....	\$250
\$30,000.....	\$300
\$35,000.....	\$350
\$40,000.....	\$400
\$45,000.....	\$450
\$50,000.....	\$500
\$100,000.....	\$1,000
\$200,000.....	\$2,000
\$300,000.....	\$3,000
\$400,000.....	\$4,000
\$500,000.....	\$5,000
\$600,000.....	\$6,000
\$700,000.....	\$7,000
\$800,000.....	\$8,000
\$900,000.....	\$9,000
\$1 million.....	\$10,000

...THEN INCREASE YOUR GIVING BY THIS AMOUNT

## WILL YOU ACCEPT THE 1% CHALLENGE?

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE MISSISSIPPI CHURCHES WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM! WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUED YOUR CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP AS WE SEEK TO ADVANCE THE KINGDOM OF GOD!



Stewardship/CP Department  
601-292-3347

# IGNITE

March 4-5, 2016

Garaywa Camp & Conference Center

IGNITE is a missions weekend for ALL girls  
7th - 12th grades and their leaders.  
(Formerly known as the Mississippi Acteens Convention or MAC)

IGNITE will allow participants to experience:

- Missionary Speakers
- Praise and Worship
- Breakout Sessions
- Mission Projects
- Fellowship with other girls

**Cost: \$12.50 program fee**  
plus, Garaywa meals & lodging

**Schedule:** Friday: 5:30 p.m. Check-in  
6:30 p.m. Dinner  
7:30 p.m. Worship

Saturday: 7:45 a.m. Breakfast  
12:15 p.m. Lunch  
5:00 p.m. Dismiss

**DEADLINE to REGISTER**  
February 19, 2016

Visit our Convention Web site for Registration details: [www.mbc.org/](http://www.mbc.org/) (Select Events and search by date) or Contact Julie Roberts (WMU) at [jroberts@mbcb.org](mailto:jroberts@mbcb.org) or 601-292-3317

## Merry Christmas!

to pastors in the Baptist Convention of New York through the Suit Project ministry.

Every year we seek to bless pastors and their wives with gifts, sending pastors new suits and their wives gift cards. This ministry has been blessing ministers and their families since 1963. Join in making the holidays even more special for these ministers by giving to the suit project. Donations to this ministry can be a rewarding fundraising project for any group in your church: Royal Ambassadors, Girls in Action, WMU, Men's Ministry, VBS, or youth.

To make donations, or for more information, contact the Men's Ministry Department of the MBCB at 800-748-1651, Ext. 335, 601-292-3335, or E-mail [dveil@mbcb.org](mailto:dveil@mbcb.org).



# 2016

STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 1

WHEELER GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH  
CORINTH, MS

*"...the fields are white already to harvest!"*  
john 4:35



BOB  
PITMAN



HERB  
REAVIS



JIM  
FUTRAL



JUNIOR  
HILL



KARA  
BLACKARD  
(POST CHURCH PASTOR)



PHIL  
HOSKINS



SAMMY  
GILBREATH



BOB  
SMITH

SPONSORED BY THE EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT OF  
THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD



JIM FUTRAL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR-TREASURER  
DON LUND, DIRECTOR, EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

## 2016 SUMMER CAMPS

CENTRAL HILLS

### Children's Mission Camp

Cost \$120

Three Day Camp:

June 30 - July 2

July 11 - 13

July 14 - 16

July 25 - 27

July 28 - 30

Cost \$150

Four Day Camp:

July 6 - 9

### Summer Mission Camp for Boys

Cost \$175

July 18 - 22

### Lad/Dad Weekend

Cost \$42.50

July 22 - 23

### Last Chance Camp

August 1 - 3

### Kid's Camp

June 20 - 22

June 23 - 25

June 27 - 29

Questions:  
MS Kid's Camps contact:  
Jo Wasson, 601-292-3216  
jwasson@mbcb.org

### Connect Camp

June 6 - 9

June 9 - 12

June 14 - 17

Questions:  
Connect Camps contact:  
Rene Edwards, 601-292-3293  
redwards@mbcb.org

Central Hills Baptist Retreat  
6377 Attala Rd. 4227, West, MS 39192-7754  
(phone) 662-289-9730 | (fax) 662-289-9718  
Shane Thrash, camp manager | shanethrash@mbcb.org



PASTOR/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

## 2016 OPPORTUNITIES

### JANUARY

DEACON EMPHASIS (this can be held anytime)

**Purpose:** Inform and challenge deacon chairmen about needs and resources.

**Details:** Look for listings of resources and aids for your church deacon chairman and ministry on our Web page.

**Contact:** Michael Lee: mlee@mbcb.org or Debbie at dbrashier@mbcb.org, 601-292-3305

### FEBRUARY

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE: STEWARDSHIP OF INFLUENCE - February 9

**Purpose:** Inform and encourage leaders to develop healthy churches & ministers (w/Johnny Hunt)

**Place:** Broadmoor Baptist Church, Madison

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. - Pre-session for Pastors and staff members age 55+ "Finishing Strong"

10:00 a.m. - Registration

10:30 a.m. - First session will begin; open to all leaders

**Contact:** Michael Lee: mlee@mbcb.org or Debbie at dbrashier@mbcb.org, 601-292-3305 or namb.net/leadership.MS or mbcb.org/johnnyhunt

Pray this day for...

November 13 - December 3, 2015

*"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."*

*Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)*

Pray for: **John & Deborah Royals**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through regional office support, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Billy & Susan Sanson**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through chaplaincy, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Jonathan & Bethany Sharp**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through community outreach & church planting.

Pray for: **George & Geraldine Smith**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach & church planting.

Pray for: **Thomas & Janna Smith**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples in Mexico & Peru through regional office support and church planting.

Pray for: **Steven & Ruth Robertson**, missionaries ministering to Southeast Asian Peoples through financial administration, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **C. & Marleen Robinson**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through business, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Karl & Peggy Wallace**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through mission administration & church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Regina White**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach, evangelism & church planting.

Pray for: **Floyd & Sylvia Wingo**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Charles & Shannon Worthing**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through community outreach.

Pray for: **James & Mary Adair**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Bethany Allen**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through community outreach.

Pray for: **Richard & Martha Seal**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through financial administration, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Laurie & David Bledsoe**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach, evangelism.

Pray for: **Kaye Brooks**, missionary ministering to American Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **Donald & Donna Brown**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach, evangelism & church planting.

Pray for: **Karen Brown**, missionary ministering to American Peoples through nursing.

Pray for: **John & Claudia Brown**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Matthew Burke**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Pamela Carlton**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through theological education, church/home outreach & evangelism.

The IMB missionaries listed in the HouseTops prayer calendar are currently active in 2-4 year terms or in career service.

**ROMANS**  
12:1-2

BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND

**YEC**  
YOUTH EVANGELISM CHALLENGE

December 28-29, 2015  
Mississippi College

Registration Begins:  
Monday, Dec. 28 at 12:00 PM

Challenge Concludes:  
Tuesday, Dec. 29 at 12:00 PM

ALSO SPECIAL TRAINING FOR ADULT LEADERS  
LED BY GARY PERMENTER

Evangelism Department  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
P.O. BOX 530, Jackson, MS 39205

1/3/96  
Miss Katelyn R. Brown  
Parents: D & D  
European Peoples

1/4/12  
Miss Titus D.  
Parents: K & C  
Restricted

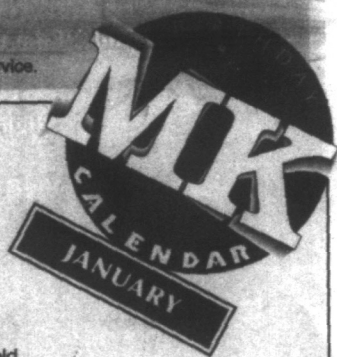
1/4/11  
Mr. Wyatt  
Parents: L & L  
Restricted

1/13/05  
Mr. Isaac  
Parents: B & L  
Restricted

1/14/08  
Mr. Max  
Parents: J & S  
Restricted

1/19/12  
Mr. Tate  
Parents: L & L  
Restricted

1/21/97  
Mr. Caleb Holyfield  
Parents: M & P  
European Peoples



Encourage an MK with a card!

To be mailed from  
WMU 12/1/15

**PLEASE NOTE THE TIMING:** Thank you for your love and support of MKs by sending Birthday cards! Because of the sending to other countries, there is a need to get cards sent a month ahead of birthday. As soon as the list is in the Baptist Record, please send the cards and not wait until a couple of weeks before the date of the birthday. It is posted two months ahead to give time to receive cards and then to mail them a month ahead of time to insure arrival around birthday. Again, thank you for being a blessing to so many with this ministry!

**MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS NOTE:** Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.

**FOR SECURITY,** cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MCB WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205.

Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.

HOUSE TOPS



# First Person: The human face of IMB woes

By Jared C. Wellman  
Correspondent

Several years ago, I pastored a small church in East Texas. Our annual budget was slim, yet a stout conviction of our fellowship was giving to missions. We designated 10% of our annual budget to it. I sometimes wondered if our tiny church with our even tinier budget really made a scratch on the proverbial surface of the lost world.

One summer I was in Nazareth Village in Israel alongside several other pastors on a tour of the country. While walking into a bookstore, one of the older pastors called me over and introduced me to an International Mission Board (IMB) missionary. I'll never forget how he did it: "Jared," he said, "come meet one of our missionaries."

For the first time in my tenure as a Southern Baptist pastor, I genuinely felt connected to missions. I realized that my giving touched real people.

This illustrates the beauty



WELLMAN

of the Cooperative Program, but it also showcases a weakness. While it's true that every active church can say that they support international missionaries through the Cooperative Program, it's also true that, sometimes, the missionaries are nameless numbers (as are the lost people they serve).

The Cooperative Program is more than just sharing money to support missions. It's about sharing money to support missionaries. That is, the Cooperative Program is about supporting living, breathing people who share the Gospel with dying, breathing people.

In the downsizing of our international mission force due to budget shortfalls, we are losing 600-800 living, breathing people whose lives impact countless dying, breathing people. I attended my first meeting as a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in September and, as you would imagine, IMB

drawdown issue loomed over the gathering. One major concern is how IMB downsizing might impact the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

That, however, reflects our problem. The concern is framed in financial terms. IMB isn't a budget item or an offering. It's people. Living, breathing people. It's people with passions and hopes and dreams and convictions and families and lives. Most important, it's saved people reaching lost people with the Gospel.

It's judicious to be concerned about the impact of IMB's budget reset, but this concern should segue to the real problem — lost people. If we express more concern over a budget or an offering rather than the lives being touched, we forget who and what we are as Southern Baptists.

Missions shouldn't be a cog of the church's machine, but the other way around.

The current issue is not an IMB issue. It's an "us" issue. IMB has, year after year,

continued to keep and send missionaries but the average church isn't providing the necessary assets to keep all our missionaries on the field, not to mention send more out.

This is why the IMB needs the church's support now more than ever. It would be a categorical atrocity if our churches' Cooperative Program gifts stagnate or decline week by week, or if this year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering dips a cent lower than the \$153,002,394 received last year, when this year's ingathering should be the largest in history.

Southern Baptist pastors must teach their people that the Cooperative Program isn't just a line item in the budget but a cooperation of believers to support other believers to create more believers.

Pastors need to think about leading our churches to increase their annual Cooperative Program giving. "Annual" is the key word. IMB needs consistent gifts to keep missionaries on the field.

Also, pastors need to begin preparing their people for

the upcoming Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in December by asking how we can strategically and creatively raise more money.

What kind of event can we host? What kind of appeal can we make to place a face beside the number? What sacrifice can we make or what corner can we cut in our personal budgets?

More than ever, this is the time to come together as Southern Baptists. Let's turn the Cooperative Program into a Cooperative Initiative. Let's remember that our churches exist because of the Great Commission and not the other way around. Let's remember that there are faces behind the numbers.

Wellman is pastor of Mission Dorado Church in Odesa, Texas, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. This column first appeared in the Southern Baptist TEXAN and appears here courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style and clarity.

## Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

## Revivals & Homecomings

► **Slayden Church, Marshall Association:** Revival, Nov. 15 - 18; Mac Ables, speaker; Rusty Fair, pastor.

► **Line Creek Church, Morton:** Homecoming, Nov. 15; 11 a.m., followed by dinner

on the grounds and cemetery meeting; Jerry Holmes, speaker; Tal Vardaman, pastor.

► **Jericho Church, Gunton:** Homecoming and 135th anniversary, Nov.

15; Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Jodie Johnson, speaker; Brandon Allread and the Rogers and Cousar families, music; Marvin Robbins, pastor.

## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing: no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electroni-

cally via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

## RACISM

cont. from p. 1

the church that is for the city," Floyd said. "Each pastor must rise up and be the prophetic voice relating to the issue of racism, calling it what it is, praying against what it really is, and if the price is high, the price is high."

Floyd and Jerry Young, president of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. (NBC), and pastor of New Hope Church in Jackson, moderated a panel discussion on racism and delivered joint keynote addresses. Ten SBC pastors and ten NBC pastors were on hand for the panel discussion.

The SBC is the nation's largest Christian evangelical faith group, with approximately 15.5 million members in more than 51,000 churches. The NBC is the largest group of black Baptists in the U.S., with as many as 7.5 million members in 31,000 churches.

Young joined Floyd in calling the church to action.

"I believe that it is God's providence that has brought us here today," Young said. "I am absolutely prayerful that when we leave this place, that those of us who are here will have decided that we're going to spearhead a movement in this country that is relative primarily to the church, that we will no longer be satisfied to be persons who will simply declare the Gospel with our lips, but we're going to demonstrate it with our lives."

"Because in the final analysis, ... Jesus says that the church... [we] alone are the salt and the light of the world," Young said, "and if the church is not light, and if the church is not salt, then the world itself is left to nothing but darkness and decay."

Young called Floyd a friend, a "tremendous brother," and a "courageous leader" who led in convening the pastors from across the U.S. for the event. During his two terms as SBC president, Floyd has been emphatic about erasing racism from the convention and encouraging both clerical and congregational diversity.

"It has been a tremendous delight of mine and perhaps one of the greatest blessings and privileges God has bestowed upon this country preacher, when He allowed me to meet Dr. Ronnie Floyd," said Young, who grew up on a plantation in the Mississippi Delta. "This gentleman is the real deal. He is an outstanding Christian gentleman."

Floyd presented the church as one body of Christ, descended from one man and comprising one race. "Mississippi, in America there is only one race — the human race. We all come from one man, Adam. Every nationality comes from Adam. Every ethnicity on this earth comes from Adam," he said, referencing Acts 17:26-28.

"The Scripture says from one man He has made every nationality to live on the whole earth and has determined their appointed times and the boundaries of where they live. He did this so that they might seek God and perhaps they



**RACE DISCUSSION** — Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd (third from right) and Jerry Young (second from right), president of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., and pastor of New Hope Church in Jackson, lead a panel discussion on the state of racial reconciliation in Mississippi and the country Nov. 4 at the Jackson Convention Center in downtown Jackson. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

might reach out and find Him, though He is not far from each of us. For in Him we live, and move and exist."

Floyd quoted lines from the late Martin Luther King's Letter from a Birmingham Jail, in which King lamented a "deep fog of misunderstanding" and "dark clouds of racial prejudice" in America.

"Sadly and regrettably, after 52 years since that letter was written, this deep fog, filled with racism, subsequent injustices, and misunderstanding has not lifted fully," Floyd said. "In fact in the last 18 months in our country, it has become like a fire that has received a fresh blowing mighty wind and rather than the fire coming from heaven from the power of the Holy Spirit on our churches, the fire is raging from the DNA of our hearts."

Mission Mississippi President Neddie Winters joined Floyd and Young in calling the church to action. "It is time for the Christian community, for the church of Jesus Christ, to do what it professes to do — stand, and live, and act like Christians, and be the salt and light for our society. Too long have we been silent on this issue as a church, and as a community."

The nonprofit Mission Mississippi represents itself as working "to encourage and demonstrate grace in the Body of Christ, across racial lines, so that communities throughout Mississippi can see the practical evidence of the Gospel message."

William H. Perkins Jr., editor of *The Baptist Record*, contributed to this article.

## BIBL i O C I P H E R

IKM SP MRO DUSWSM CP RSA MRHM

WHSDON KU XODKD PWCA MRO NOHN

NTOZZ SB ECK, RO MRHM WHSDON

KU JRWSM PWCA MRO NOHN DRHZZ

HZDC VKSJYOB ECKW ACWMHZ

ICNSOD IE RSD DUSWSM MRHM

NTOZZOMR SB ECK.

WCAHBD OSQRM: OZOLOB

Clue: A = M

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Hebrews 11:6

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

## CLASSIFIEDS

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN GALLATIN, TN, IS PRAYERFULLY ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR SENIOR PASTOR.** Please send resume to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 369, Gallatin, TN 37066.

**PULPIT SUPPLY AVAILABLE:** Retired Southern Baptist Navy chaplain available for Sunday pulpit supply on short notice (pastor illness, vacation, rest, etc.). 100 mile radius of Hattiesburg. Member of Hardy Street Baptist Church. Graduate of New Orleans Baptist and Fuller Theological Seminaries. References available. Compensation unimportant. Contact Dr. Benny J. Hornsby at 601-408-4608 or villerfranche60@yahoo.com

**CHURCH PEWS FOR SALE:** 15ft. padded church pews, seat and back w/ blue fabric. 22" available, \$100.00 each. Would like to sale all at one time but will consider other options. Can send pictures if needed, will need to pick up. Call Chris Lewellen @ 662-837-2581. Ripley, MS.

**PEWS FOR SALE:** 23 pews, 12 feet long. Seats 175-200 people. Like new with padded seat, back, and padded on rear back as well. Hunter green with a peach tint. Color can match a variety of color schemes. All pews for \$3,900. Contact Jerry Tidwell at 731-668-1111 or email at jtidwell8787@gmail.com

**AUTUMN LEAVES TOUR OCT 7-20, 2016.** Fly into Philadelphia and begin a tour that includes Niagara Falls, New York, Boston and the New England States. Call S. McIntire at (662) 494-7917 for information.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MANSFIELD, LOUISIANA IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME MINISTER OF WORSHIP AND ADULT MINISTRIES.** Please send resumes to: First Baptist Church, Attn: Search Committee, 1710 McArthur Drive, Mansfield, LA 71052.

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**UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME YOUTH MINISTER.** Send resumes to University Baptist Church, Attention: Ashley Barrios/ Search Committee, 904 Menard Street, Thibodaux, LA 70301 or email ubc@ubcthibodaux.net

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## MS POSITIONS

**SENIOR PASTOR POSITION OPENING AT FBC LYMAN IN GULFPORT, MS,** average attendance of 150. Please send resumes to jcunningham@fbclyman.org

**POSITION OPENING: PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER.** New Sight Baptist Church, Brookhaven, MS. Please email resumes to attn.: Youth Minister Search Committee newsightbc@cableone.com or mail to 629 Forest Trail NE, Brookhaven, MS 39601.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SUMRALL, MISS., SEEKS FULL-TIME MINISTER TO CHILDREN/DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES.** Bachelor's degree required (seminary preferred); prior experience working with children and in congregational or organizational setting required (experience as children's minister or equivalent preferred). Send resume and cover letter to office@fbcsumrall.org

**ECRU BAPTIST CHURCH IS IN SEARCH OF A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF YOUTH.** Please send resumes to: Minister of Youth Search Committee, 550 Main Street, Ecrú, MS 38841 or email to Justin McMillen at justin@ecrubaptist.org

**NEEDED: FULL TIME OR BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN AT ASHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH IN ASHLAND, MS.** Send resumes to Mr. Stanley Poff, P.O. Box 35, Ashland, MS 38603 or email to stanley-poff@yahoo.com

**FBC MENDENHALL IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC.** Please send resume to PO Box 366 Mendenhall, MS 39114 or email to swarren@fbcmendenhall.org

**FULL-TIME MINISTER OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC.** North Winona Baptist Church in Winona, MS is accepting resumes for the full-time position of Minister of Worship and Music. Please send resumes to 602 Alberta Drive, Winona, MS 38967 or email to nwbcdmoffices@att.net

**STRONGHOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL YOUTH MINISTER.** All resumes can be sent to Stronghope Baptist Church, attention Search Committee, 5006 Monticello Rd., Wesson, Ms 39191 or email to sbd-searchcommittee@yahoo.com

**CORINTH BAPTIST CHURCH OF MAGEE, MS IS NOW ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE YOUTH MINISTER POSITION TILL DECEMBER 7TH.** Those interested please send your resume to: Corinth Baptist Church, attn: Youth Search Committee, 207 Church Rd., Magee, MS 39111.

**MORRISON CHAPEL BC IN CLEVELAND MS IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR.** Please send resumes to George Barefoot, 1612 Deering St, Cleveland MS 38732 or barefoot1016@hotmail.com. For more information call 662-719-5445.

**BIGGERSVILLE FBC IN ALCOHN COUNTY IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR.** Send resumes to 443 CR 514, Rienzi, MS 38865 or email bpnelms@gmail.com

**COPIAH COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION SEEKING PART-TIME ASSOCIATION MISSION DIRECTOR.** Please send Resumes to: Mr. Larry Papizan, Copiah County Baptist Association, P.O. Box 230, Hazlehurst MS 39083.



## Keeping His Promise • Genesis 21:1-8

Twenty-five years after God, called Abraham, He fulfilled His promise and gave Abraham and Sarah a son. When Sarah was first expecting, I wonder if Abraham thought she had been eating too much honey and lamb stew. Since she was past the way most women know they are pregnant, (Genesis 18:11, "Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women," KJV), at what point did they dare discuss the possibility that God truly was blessing them? As Sarah began to show, I am sure they both developed an "I told you so" attitude, and rightfully so. The Lord had asked so much from them. I suspect they were so proud they could strut while sitting down.

Surely those around them both had inquired discreetly about their new names, "Great father and Princess of whom?" Then Isaac was born. Sarah kept her sense of humor and said of his name in Genesis 21:6, "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me." (KJV). Certainly many shook their heads and said the Hebrew or Canaanite equivalent of "Garleee! Who'd a thunk it?"

While it is not a popular subject at most social gatherings, other than a Bar Mitzvah, circumcision was part of God's covenant

with His chosen people. Isaac was circumcised as the Lord had commanded Abraham in Genesis 17:9-14. God's covenant always requires blood to be shed, according to Hebrew 9:22. As His covenant required a physical change in the male body, so being part of the New Covenant requires a changed heart. The apostle Paul wrote about this in Colossians 2:11, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision

made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ," (KJV). Jesus gave up all His flesh

to pay for our sins, and shed His precious blood that our hearts may be changed.

In physical circumcision, the male baby unknowingly gives up some flesh. In spiritual circumcision, both male and female chose to die to self and to live to Christ. Colossians 2:13 adds, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him,

having forgiven you all trespasses," (KJV). Isaac's circumcision was a picture of God's future covenant paid in full by Jesus. As a result, they had a party.

Celebrations are part of God's great work. We often overlook that aspect of God's work. Abraham, Sarah, their servants and friends had a multi-day party when Isaac was circumcised. Surely there was much "laughter," which is what Isaac means in

Hebrew. In Luke 15:6 and 9 the shepherd who found his lost sheep and the women who found her lost coin each through a

### Explore the Bible with Rick Henson



party, inviting friends and neighbors. In verse 24 of the same chapter, the father of the prodigal son greatly celebrated when his son returned home. Everybody was happy except the older brother and the fattened calf. Luke 15:10 reads, "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," (KJV).

We better get used to celebrating, for Revelation 19:7 reads, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready," (KJV). Some believers look like their mouths would break if they smiled even a little. A friend once said that a believer's smile should be big enough to eat a banana sideways. When we were children we sang the song, "if you're happy and you know it, clap your hands." Maybe we should amend that song to say, "if you're happy and you know it, tell your face." Do you celebrate when someone is saved? God does.

So Abraham and Sarah celebrated and they obeyed. They celebrated God's kept promise with a party and they obeyed in the rite of circumcision. Abraham was not saved because of how good he was. Twice he passed Sarah off as his sister to save his own skin (she was his half-sister, according to Genesis 20:12). He was saved because he trusted and obeyed the Lord. "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

Henson is pastor of Oakdale Church, Brandon.

## Confront Sin • Daniel 5:17-28

We've heard the old saying, "The handwriting's on the wall". It means, of course, that something is going to happen regarding a situation, and it won't have a pleasant outcome. In this week's lesson, we'll see where the phrase originated, and how it foretold a sad fate for the Babylonian king involved.

Over 50 years had elapsed between the second chapter and this text in chapter five. Daniel, taken captive as a young man (possibly a teenager), had been serving the Babylonian empire for decades. Earning a reputation as one able to accurately interpret dreams, he was about to be called upon to do so again.

Several kings had occupied the throne since the final story of Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4. Belshazzar now shared joint-rule with Nabonidus, his father. However, danger awaited the kingdom. Darius, king of the Medes and Persians, had amassed an army against Babylon, and they were camped near Belshazzar's capital. Displaying incredible arrogance, Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles (Daniel 5:1 NIV). With brazen irreverence, he and his guests drank wine from gold goblets taken from the temple in Jerusalem. As they imbibed, they praised their false gods (v. 5).

Suddenly, the fingers of a human hand appeared, and began inscribing a message

on the wall's plaster. Belshazzar watched, pale-faced and terrified, and quickly summoned his astrologers to interpret the message. When they were unable to do so, the queen recommended he call for Daniel (vs. 10-12). Belshazzar promised the wise prophet great rewards, but Daniel declined them, answering, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else (v. 17)". He then reminded Belshazzar of the chastening hand of God on Nebuchadnezzar, resulting in the former king putting aside his pride, and humbling himself before the Lord. Daniel clarified the difference in the two: instead of humbling himself, Belshazzar had set himself up "against the Lord of heaven" (v. 23).

God had sent the hand to write the message, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN" (v. 25). "Mene" signified counting or numbering. Tekel referred to measuring or weighing something. Parsin indicated something broken or divided. The synopsis was that God had numbered the days

of Belshazzar's kingdom and ended it (v. 26), his life had been "weighed on the scales and found wanting" (v. 27) and the kingdom would be divided between the Medes and Persians (v. 28). Greek historians noted that these two forces invaded as the throng was in a drunken stupor, and they killed Belshazzar. Darius the Mede assumed the throne.

God delivered a fateful, sin-condemning message of judgement to the haughty ruler through Daniel. Throughout Scripture, we see examples of the Lord's using one of his servants to confront wrongdoing in another. In 2 Samuel 12:1-14, the prophet Nathan was sent to David with

a stern message, relaying a clear picture of David's sins. In Galatians 2:11 and 14, Paul opposed Peter "to his face" for "not acting in line with the truth of the gospel" concerning his Gentile brothers. Matthew 18:15-17 shows how to interact with a brother who sins against us. And although James warned early believers about judg-

ing (James 4:11-12), he obviously didn't mean we are not to expose and challenge evil, as he had just condemned various sinful behaviors in the first few chapters of the book.

So what's the bottom line? Obviously, the Holy Spirit doesn't need our help to point out everyone's sins; we wouldn't have any friends if we did! However, there may be times the Lord does ask us to discuss an issue with someone. Although Matthew 7:1-5 is a Scripture many use as a blanket statement against judging others, in verse five, Jesus says to get the "plank" out of our own eye, "and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye". We must deal with our own wooden beams of sin in order to rightly-help a brother handle his.

Galatians 6:1 further clarifies the matter: "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted." A key phrase here is, "you who are spiritual". If we feel the need to take a brother or sister to task, we should make sure the Lord is behind it, and carefully examine our own life, to be sure we are in a close and humble relationship with the Lord before doing so.

Ann Maniscalco is a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Ocean Springs.

### Bible Studies for Life with Ann Maniscalco



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## HERO

cont. from p. 1

subpoena pastors' sermons, council members felt they had done what they could do. The rest was in God's hands.

The year-and-a-half-long battle over Houston's Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO) created a divide within the fourth-largest and one of the most racially diverse cities in

the nation. If passed, the ordinance would have required businesses and public areas to permit individuals to use the restroom of the gender with which they self-identify.

Critics cited religious liberty concerns as well as potential safety concerns if, for example, a male sexual predator claimed to identify as a woman in order to have access to women and girls in public restrooms.

Houston Mayor Annise Parker, an open lesbian and advocate for HERO, responded to the defeat of the ordinance by criticizing its opponents. "This is a campaign of fear-mongering and deliberate lies. Deliberate lies. They just kept spewing an ugly war of lies from our TV screens and from pulpits. This is about a small group of people who want to preserve their ability to discriminate."

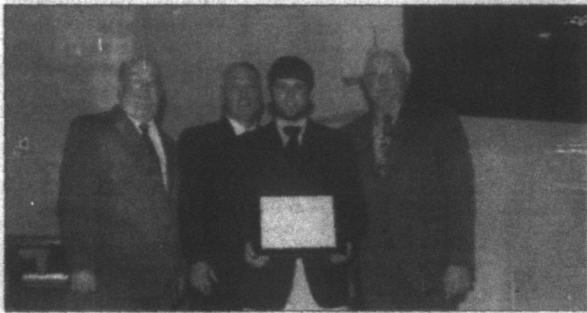
Parker had previously ordered city attorneys to subpoena sermon notes of Houston-area pastors who publicly opposed HERO.

Khahn Huynh, pastor of Vietnamese Church in the Houston area, reminded the people at the Watch Party, "Churches, this is the beginning. We need to rise up and preach the Gospel. The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He loves the sinner but He hates

sin, and that's our language. That's our message. We are not hating on people, but we are standing on His Word. The Gospel is a Gospel of hope."

Dave Welch, executive director of the Houston Area Pastors Council, emphasized the need to do the same nationwide because the fight in Houston is not unique. Civic engagement, he said, should go hand in hand with other ministry within the community.

## Just for the Record



**MONTGOMERY CHURCH, LINCOLN COUNTY**, ordained Trent Moak into the Gospel Ministry Nov. 1. Shown are Larry Russell, Montgomery Church; Wayne Moak, Clear Branch Church; Moak; and Mike McKee of First Church, Cuba, Alabama. Moak has been called as pastor of Pleasant Valley Church in Franklin County.



**NEW HOME CHURCH, SMITH COUNTY**, honored pastor Charles Welch Oct. 18 with a reception for pastor appreciation.



The M&M (music and missions) group from **WEIR CHURCH, WEIR**, went out Oct. 28 and treated the shut-ins in the community. The children gave out 20 treat bags and visited with the recipients.



**WILLIAMSVILLE CHURCH, KOSCIUSKO**, opened its doors to their new sanctuary, debt-free, Oct. 11. During the evening service, the congregation marched into the new building from the gymnasium which housed the worship service during construction for over a year.

### In other Church News:

> **Main St. Church, Hattiesburg**, is hosting a retirement reception for David Rogers for 42 years of service Nov. 15, 2-4 p.m.

> **Tylertown Church, Tylertown**, hosted its 15<sup>th</sup> annual performance of Judgment House Oct. 25 - Nov. 1. 1,665 people attended from 16 different counties and parishes. Sixty-three received Christ, and 136 rededicated their lives to Him. Follow-up will be done through local churches.



**EMMANUEL CHURCH, COLUMBIA**, held a deacon ordination Nov. 1. Shown are Taylor McCain, Matthew McCain, pastor Chris Cawley, Louis Crout, and Beth Crout.



**SPRING HILL CHURCH, WATERFORD**, licensed Tyler Winningham to the ministry. He is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and is youth pastor at the church. He is shown with pastor John Parker.



**FIRST CHURCH, AMORY**, celebrated the retirement of Ray Burke as minister of music after 42 years of service. A dinner and roast was held in his honor Aug. 29 with a Ray Day service the next day, which featured a performance of a new anthem by Marty Funderburk, Imagine Hallelujah, and a reception. Shown are Burke and his wife, Becky.



**FRIENDSHIP CHURCH, ABERDEEN**, held a commissioning service for Hal Bourland and Buzzy Cullum, who will be leaving to serve in Haiti. Shown are Bourland, pastor Rick Burton, and Cullum.



#### A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR GLENN DENTON:

Our desire is to have a Baptist conference where preaching is emphasized! You'll hear amazing music, have a shoutin' good time, but most of all we'll hear Bible preaching from the best preachers in America!

"...It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."  
1 Corinthians 1:21

#### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

WEDNESDAY NIGHT  
Worship w/HBC (6:30 pm)  
Two evening preachers  
THURSDAY & FRIDAY  
Worship w/HBC (9:00 am)  
Three morning preachers  
Lunch provided  
Afternoon free  
Worship w/HBC (6:30 pm)  
Two evening preachers

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Hillcrest Baptist Church  
621 Hartsville Pike  
Lebanon, TN 37087